



English Toolkit: Indicator 1.2.4

Student Handout: English: Indicator 1.2.4

Goal 1.0 Reading, Reviewing and Responding to Texts

Expectation 1.2 The student will construct, examine, and extend meaning of traditional and contemporary works recognized as having significant literary merit.

Indicator 1.2.4 The student will identify and/or explain connections between and among themes and/or styles of two or more texts.

Assessment Limits:

Analyzing the similarities or differences in styles (e.g., formal, informal, conversational, scholarly, journalistic, poetic) of two or more texts

Analyzing the similarities or differences in themes of two or more texts

Analyzing the ways in which different texts illustrate a similar theme

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English Indicator 1.2.4

Read the excerpt from "[On Safari with the Experts](#)," an article about a safari outfitting camp in Kenya, East Africa. Then answer the following about both "[In the Country of Grasses](#)" and "[On Safari with the Experts](#)."

Which pair of words best completes the following statement?

While the essay "[In the Country of Grasses](#)" is mostly written in a ____ style, the article "[On Safari with the Experts](#)" is mostly written in a ____ style.

- A. poetic...creative
- B. formal...scholarly
- C. descriptive...factual
- D. journalistic...conversational

Correct Answer

- C. descriptive...factual

Item

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Handouts

On Safari with the Experts

¹A new generation of Masai safari guides is growing up in Kenya, and their expertise can lead to memorable encounters with cheetah and other big game.

²At the airstrip, in the heart of the Masai Mara game reserve in Kenya, a fleet of safari vehicles is lined up, waiting to take incoming visitors to their camps and lodges. The driver-guides are dressed for the part in faded khaki—all except one, who sits at the wheel of his Toyota Land Cruiser wearing the blood-red robes of a Masai elder. Jackson ole Looseyia is an Il Dorobo Masai, a clan of hunter-gatherers who live in the hills just outside the reserve.

³On the way to Rekero, the tented camp where Jackson is both a guide and a shareholder, we pause to watch a herd of buffalo. “Did you know a buffalo can produce 20 litres of saliva a day?” he says. This, I discover, is Jackson’s style. He dispenses his knowledge in handy sound-bytes.

⁴Rekero is owned by Ron Beaton, a third-generation Kenyan who also runs a lodge on the reserve’s northern fringes. It is an idyllic campsite—the loveliest I have ever seen—in a secluded part of the reserve where other vehicles seldom venture. Blue flycatchers and golden orioles flit among the leaves. By day, herds of zebra come down to drink at the Talek River. There are no fences; and at night, elephant, buffalo, hippo, and lion regularly wander between the tents.

⁵Next morning Jackson has planned a full-day game drive to the Mara Triangle, a remote and beautiful area bordering the Serengeti National Park.

“On Safari with the Experts” by Brian Jackman, copyright © Brian Jackman, from www.aardvarksafaris.com. Used by permission.

In the Country of Grasses

When traveling to new country, it is a gift to have a guide. They know the nuances¹ of the world they live in. Samuel smells rain the night before it falls. I trust his instincts and borrow them until I uncover my own. But there is danger here. One can become lazy in the reliance on a guide. The burden of a newcomer is to pay attention.

The Land Rover slips into the savannah like a bird dog entering a marsh. We are fully present. I watch Samuel's eyes scan the horizon. He points south.

"Zebra," he says. "They are migrating north from Tanzania. Thousands more are on their way."

Hundreds of zebras walk the skyline. They become animated heat waves.

We drive closer. I have never seen such concentrations of animals. At one point I think I hear thunder. It is the hooves of wildebeests. Suddenly, the herd of zebra expands to include impalas, gazelles, and animals I do not recognize.

"Topi," Samuel says.

I flip through my field guide of African mammals and find it. An extraordinary creature, it is the color of mahogany with blue patches on its flanks and ocher² legs. I look at the topi again, this time through binoculars. Its black linear face with spiraling horns creates the illusion of a primitive mask. The topi I watch stands motionless on a termite mound. Binoculars down, I look at Samuel. He says the topi resemble hartebeests. A small herd of topi runs in front of the vehicle in a rocking-horse gait³ and vanishes.

⁸ Samuel gives away his knowledge sparingly—in gentle, quiet doses. He is respectful of his teachers and those he is teaching. In this way he is generous. He gives me the pleasure of discovery. Slowly, African riddles unravel themselves like a piece of cut linen.

The sweet hissing of grasses accompanies us as we move ahead. We pass the swishing tails of wildebeests. We are looking for lions.

¹⁰ Anticipation is another gift for travelers in unfamiliar territory. It quickens the spirit. The contemplation of the unseen world; imagination piqued⁴ in consideration of animals.

We stop. Samuel points. I see nothing. I look at Samuel for clues. He points again. I still see nothing but tall, tawny grasses around the base of a lone tree. He smiles and says, "Lions."

I look. I look so hard it becomes an embarrassment—and then I see eyes. Lion eyes. Two amber beads with a brown matrix. Circles of contentment until I stand; the lion's eyes change, and I am flushed with fear.

"Quiet," Samuel whispers. "We will watch for a while."

As my eyes become acquainted with lion, I begin to distinguish fur from grass. I realize there are two lions, a male and a female lying together under the stingy shade of a thorn tree. I can hear them breathe. The male is breathing hard and fast, his black mane in rhythm with the breeze. He puts his right paw on the female's shoulder. Ears twitch. We are no more than ten feet away. He yawns. His yellow canines are as long as my index finger. His jowls look like well-worn leather. He stands. The grasses brush his belly. Veins protrude

from his leg muscles. This lion is lean and strong. No wonder that in the Masai mind every aspect of a lion is imbued⁵ with magic.

¹ nuances: degrees of difference in meaning

² ocher: color having shades of yellow, orange, and brown

³ gait: way of moving by lifting the feet in a different order or rhythm such as a trot, gallop, or run

⁴ piqued: excited one's interest or curiosity

⁵ imbued: filled; saturated

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